Electrification of Railways

456. SHRI J. P. GOYAL: Will the Minister of TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Planning Commission had asked the railways to phase out steam locomotives without delay and accelerate the pace of electrification for conservation of liquid fuels and more efficient energy utilisation;

(b) what are the details in this regard; and

(c) what steps the railways have taken to implement the suggestions of the Planning Commission?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF RAILWAYS (SHRI MADHAVRAO SCINDIA): (a) to (c) The Seventh Five Year Plan document envisages acceleration of the programme of conversion from steam to diesel and electric traction and completely phasing out of steam locomotives latest by the year 2000 A.D. The Plan also envisages electrification of 3,400 route kilometres of track. Railways are taking necessary action for implementing these objectives.

National programme for control of blindness

457. SHRI RAOOF VALIULLAH: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the national programme for control of blindness has failed to reach the desired levels in spite of its inclusion in the 20-Point Programme;

(b) if so, what is the ultimate aim of the programme and what are the States expected to do in this regard;

(c) whether mobile units have been deployed and infrastructure provided at the district level in all States and whether the Centre receives periodic reports from the States;

(d) whether the role of voluntary organisations has been spoiled out;

(e) if so, the details thereof; and

(f) what action Government propose to take to effectively monitor and evalute the programme in future?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH (KUMARI SAROJ KHAPARDE): (a) No, Sir.

(b) The goal of the programme is to reduce the blindness from the level of 1.4 per cent in 1975 to 0.3 per cent by 2000 A.D. The States are expecteed to develop the potential of rendering Primary and Secondary level of eye care through augmentation of opthalmic services.

(c) 80 Central Mobile Units have deployed. Infrasructure development at district level includes minimum one Ophthalmic Surgeon and essential ophthalmic equipments. The periodic reports on performance of cataract operations are being received from the States.

(d) and (e) Yes Sir, Guidelines for holding eye camps have been issued. Voluntary Organisations are being offered financial grants at the rate of Rs. 60 per intra ocular operation upto the maximum of Rs. 12000 per camp subject to the fulfilment of the laid down conditions as per guidelines. Where the voluntary organisations hold camps by utilising Govt.'s Mobile Units the financial grant is restricted to Rs. 40/- per intra-ocular operation.

(f) Central Monitoring & Evaluation Cell has been sanctioned. 18 State ophthalmic cells at the State level are continuously monitoring the various aspects of the programme including qualitative evaluation of the programme.

Unhygienic conditions in the vicinity of Central Secretariat

458. SHRI BIR BHADRA PRATAP SINGH: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the fact that sub-standard and unhygienic food items are being sold by a large number of hawkers/vendors in the vicinity of the Central Secretariat, New Delhi;

(b) if so, what action Government have taken in this regard;